

THE PROGRESS OF CIVILIZATION IN THE UNITED STATES.

ORATION

DELIVERED BEFORE THE

LITERARY SOCIETIES

OF THE

University of South Carolina,

AT COLUMBIA, S. C., JUNE 30th, 1871,

BY

HENRY W. HILLIARD.

COLUMBIA, S. C.:

CAROLINA PRINTING COMPANY'S BOOK AND JOB OFFICE.

1871.



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ORATION.

Standing here to-day, memories crowd upon me that could be awakened by no other spot in the wide world. The genius of the place asserts its supremacy over me. I can speak of nothing else until I have paid my tribute to it. Here some of the brightest years of my life were passed. In these halls, consecrated to learning, I received instruction from men distinguished for their attainments and their virtues—not one of whom survives. Through these grounds I walked in friendly intercourse with those who, in the strength of youth, and full of generous ardor, welcomed every morning with joy, and saw every evening sun shed the glory of hope upon the scene that it gilded with its beams.

The College was in its glory. It took rank with the noblest institutions in the land. It already counted among its graduates men of renown—PRESTON, whose brilliant oratory has never been rivalled in our times; McDUFFIE, whose fiery eloquence recalled the triumphs of Demosthenes; LEGARE, whose rich and varied learning was displayed in the forum, through the press, and in the Congress of the United States; and others who were accustomed to visit this great institution, to cheer us with their presence, and to guide us by their counsels.

COLUMBIA was not only the seat of Government—it was unrivalled for the elegance, the refinement, the culture of its society. It possessed every attraction. Men, eminent for their talents, their learning, their virtues, their hospitality, their public spirit; women, whose beauty was only rivalled by their grace and accomplishments, and whose purity gave them a price far above rubies, walked its streets and adorned its homes. Wealth, refinement, learning, eloquence and taste distinguished it, and made it as remarkable in this country, at that time, as Athens was in Greece in the days of Pericles.

South Carolina shone with full-orbed splendor in the great constellation of States that formed the American Union. Her public men shed lustre upon her name, and took the foremost rank among the statesmen who at that time filled the great places of trust in the Republic and adorned its councils.

Since that time I have seen much of the great world—at home and abroad. I have borne my part in the discharge of public duties. I have experienced the vicissitudes of fortune. The lights

and shadows of life have fallen across my path ; but my love for this place has never been chilled. I come now, gentlemen, at your invitation, to re-visit it. I thank you for the honor that you have conferred on me.

I should be very insensible to what is impressive, if I did not feel the ennobling influence of this scene. These classic halls, crowning an eminence of one of our most beautiful Southern cities ; this brilliant assemblage, representing the whole State ; the presence of those who have been fitted here for the varied tasks that await them in the great world which they are about to enter ; the recollections that sadden, and the hopes that cheer this hour, constitute a picture of far higher interest than any ever painted by the hand of Claude Lorraine. We shall never forget this scene ; but we shall never take part in it again. It is one of those rare occasions in human life when a goodly company stand for an hour upon some eminence that overlooks the past, the present and the future, and then descend to the common plane of the world, to take their several ways through untried and unknown scenes.

Very few, if any, of us saw the opening of the present century ; but some will doubtless witness the glowing orb that lights it descend beneath the horizon that bounds it. Is the race advancing in civilization with the march of the centuries ?

In sixteen hundred and thirty-three Galileo was in Rome. He had vindicated the truth of the system long before taught by Copernicus, known as the solar system. The sun, in the centre of revolving worlds, holds them in their orbits, and they move about him, each in its respective order. This theory was in conflict with popular opinion, and was denounced as a flat contradiction of the teachings of the Bible. Did not the whole world see the flaming sun sweeping about the globe ? Did not the Scriptures speak of the rising of the sun and its going down ? When Israel fought with the Amorites, and the victorious troops of Joshua were driving the enemy before them with great slaughter, did not that great Captain command the sun to stand still over Gideon, and the moon over the valley of Ajalon ? It was rank heresy to believe what Galileo taught. Arrested and imprisoned in the dungeons of the Inquisition, the great philosopher knelt in the presence of an assembly of ignorant Monks, and, with his hand on the Gospel, made a solemn renunciation of the astronomical truths that he had so clearly taught and so vigorously maintained. His voice, sounding in the sombre hall of the Inquisition—“ *Corde sincero, et fide non ficta abjuro, maledico et detestor supradictos errores et hereses* ”—had in its deep tones a ring of suppressed passion. He rose, and,

no longer able to control his indignation, he stamped his foot and exclaimed: "AND YET IT MOVES!" He was condemned to suffer an indefinite term of imprisonment, and to repeat every week for three years the seven penitential Psalms of David. Subsequently banished, he took up his residence, under restraint, in the neighborhood of Florence.

Standing here to-day, in the presence of this great assemblage—in the midst of objects that remind us of ruined hopes and the failure of grand enterprises—under these Southern skies—looking out upon plains so lately desolated by the rude hoof of war—I take up the words of Galileo, and, applying them to the progress of civilization in this country, I assert that "*the world moves.*"

There is an unceasing conflict between the Present and the Future. Surrounded by objects that we recognize, we are reluctant to advance. The unknown is strange, and we question it at every step, just as a child fears to enter a forest. The dominion of ideas is sometimes absolute. There is no despotism so despotic as public opinion. The world has more than once stoned its prophets. Still, we must advance. Shall we seat ourselves at the base of the Pyramids, and refuse to believe that, under other skies, there exist fairer architectural structures than these? or shall we linger upon the banks of the Nile, and await its annual overflow, fearing that nowhere else, in all the world, the earth will yield its increase? Marius, seated upon the ruins of Carthage, finds consolation in contemplating the desolation that is in harmony with his own broken fortunes. But must he rest there? or shall he rouse himself to new exertions, and dare the future? Shall he waste his life in exile? or shall he return once more to Rome, to crush his enemies?

" Why sitt'st thou dreaming o'er the ruins
 Of a noble Past, made helpless
 By the bitter wreck of all its grand interests ?
 Up, noble soul — bereft and exiled
 As thou art — go forth, and meet thy fate
 With courage, patient and supreme;
 The gods may yet accord to thee
 A Future, in whose grand fruition
 Thou shalt forget e'en the lost
 Aspirations that now so wring
 Thy bold, heroic heart."

Shall we in these Southern States sit down, like Tennyson's lotus eaters, and say:

" Let us alone! Time driveth onward fast,
 And in a little while our lips are dumb,
 Let us alone! What is it that will last?
 All things are taken from us, and become
 Portions and parcels of the dreadful Past.
 Let us alone!"

This is simply ignoble. Let us advance! The whole world is

in active movement. The march of civilization—sometimes hindered by adverse events—is still onward! The world is yet young. I believe that it is but in its spring-time. Those who would teach us that it has almost run its race, and predict a speedy termination of its course, will not number us among their disciples. Some centuries have gone by since, seated upon the plains of the East, under the serene sky, the patriarchs looked up to see Arcturus and his sons go out upon their golden courses, and the Pleiades burning in their ample circuit; and yet the world has the dew of youth on its brow. There are no signs of decay. Not only has Time written no wrinkle on the azure brow of the ocean, but the great mountains, and the illimitable forests, stand out beneath the stars in the strength of their prime.

Our race has much to learn, and much to do. In every department of life the way is open to exploration. If Columbus had listened to the counsels of the timid, would he have spread his adventurous sails upon unknown seas? or still dared the untried and unknown solitudes of the ocean, where he was compelled to keep two reckonings—one for his mutinous crew, the true one for his own inspection—when he observed, for the first time, the variation of the needle, as if he were sailing into realms where the known laws of nature did not prevail? Courage! Let us go forward.

Great progress has been made in civilization; but nothing, in this world of ours, is complete: Neither science, nor art, nor political economy, nor that highest of all arts or all sciences—what we call Government. Everything may be searched, questioned, explored, in the hope of making new discoveries, and advancing the outposts of civilization. I say everything. Of course I do not include the department of moral truth. There can be no discoveries made in that domain. Everything that is known to us of our relations to the invisible world is a pure disclosure. The most powerful glasses may be turned upon the heaven of divine truth, but they will bring to view nothing new. We may frequent solitary places, and bend the listening ear toward the world that lies beyond the boundary of our globe, but the silence remains unbroken. Revelation makes us acquainted with all that we know of the invisible. “Canst thou, by searching, find out God?” We may sit down and learn what is taught us. We may look deeply into the great disclosures. Like the ambassador of Queen Candace, we may spread out the pages of inspired truth, and, if ignorant of their meaning, ask: “Of whom speaketh the prophet thus? of himself, or of some other man?” But our feet may not pass that boundary. We may dream dreams, and see visions, but that is all.

We may indulge in speculations, and construct an ideal world, and linger upon the boundary that separates the visible from the invisible; we may, like Manfred,

"Breathe the difficult air of
The iced mountain tops, and
Outwatch the stars;"

we may invoke the inhabitants of that undiscovered country to speak to us; but that is the utmost that our enterprise can accomplish. No authentic voice breaks the silence that reigns over that region. If we would aid the progress of moral truth we must become disciples of the Great Teacher, and contribute what we can to spread the influence of the inspired writers over human thought and human life. He does most for civilization who is most successful in extending the lines of that great kingdom destined to attain complete supremacy over the whole world, and to erect trophies of its resistless power that shall survive the proudest monuments of earthly glory. But in all else—all that belongs to the heavens above us, or to the earth beneath our feet, or to the waters under the earth—we may push our inquiries with unmeasured boldness, in the hope of making discoveries far more important than any yet made known to the world.

I have spoken explicitly, because, while I wish to rouse my countrymen to an energetic participation in all that concerns the progress of civilization, and to inspire them with hope for the future of our country, I would give no encouragement to that audacious spirit which assails everything that is venerable—which fears not God, neither regards man—and which would spread over society a confusion so utter as to cause us at once to lose sight of the monuments that protect liberty, and of the landmarks that show us the way to heaven. Let us take part in the great movement that is going on all over the world. Is the eagle to rest upon the crag that shelters the nest from which he ventured forth? or shall he spread his strong wings and soar heavenward until they flash in the sun, and unscale his eye, that he may look out upon the wide landscape beneath him, and startle his prey with the wild scream that makes the rocks reverberate, and learn to battle with the storm, and to take the lesser creatures, upon which he feeds, in his talons, and tear them with his fierce beak?

Does any man doubt that the world moves? Let him stand here and throw a glance over the centuries that have gone over it since men began to gather into communities upon the plains of the East, and observe the progress of society. The characteristics of the civilization of even the later periods, which are set down in the

annals of the world as particularly bright and fortunate, are in broad contrast with our own time. No longer is an age baptised with the name of an illustrious person. No longer do we speak of any modern period as identified with the name of a liberal patron of learning—as the AUGUSTAN age; or with the splendor of imperial rule—as the age of CHARLEMAGNE; or with the glory of a long and prosperous reign—as the age of ELIZABETH. All this has gone by. It would strike the ear of the world now as strange to hear this time of ours called by any man's name. The age belongs to the people—and the great characteristic that distinguishes it is the advancement of the masses in the march of civilization. In the patriarchal time the authority of an individual was potential. Not only flocks and herds belonged to him, but, as far as the eye could reach over the outspread plains, his dependents acknowledged his sway. Even in the civilization of Greece, the influence of an individual was powerfully felt, overriding the fortunes of the people. The great object of popular favor was either the Hero or the State. The people toiled in peace, or went to the battlefield, to magnify the one or the other. There was no barrier set up for the protection of personal rights. What we call, in modern law, political liberty, was unknown. There was no general diffusion of humanizing influences which might ameliorate the character of the people, and encourage the growth of domestic virtues. The Athenian might go into the street and listen to an oration from Pericles—liberty was lauded; the glory of the State was recited in glowing terms—but Aspasia could drive Athens into war the next day, and sacrifice the people to her passion.

Rome was, for a great while, little more than a military camp; and throughout the successive periods of its history—republican or imperial—the stern qualities of the soldier were nourished. The steady courage which bore the eagles of victory over the world; the hardy virtues which enabled the legions to confront armed nations, and to defy inhospitable climes, and plant their standard upon the distant shores of the Atlantic—these were nurtured.

The peculiar characteristics of these ancient States, in the development of popular taste and manners, were widely different. In Greece the love of the beautiful prevailed. The architecture was absolutely perfect. The temples erected under the clear skies were faultless in proportions and adornments. Forms of life-like and inimitable grace were chiselled from the purest marble. Its poetry rivalled its architecture and statuary; but the finest and noblest verses recite the exploits of heroes. Homer's great men are men of war. It was not enough to describe Ulysses as wise;

he was so strong that he could hurl a huge fragment of rock further than other men could throw the discus. Its oratory was bold, impetuous and stormy; but it vindicated the independence and glory of the State, rather than the freedom and happiness of the people.

In Rome the elements of character were exhibited in forms of sternness and strength. From the capital the chariot wheels rolled out over a subjugated world; yet little was accomplished for true civilization. Its proudest works of art were triumphal arches; its far-stretching roads were highways for heavy legions; its bridges were colossal structures, for the use of great armies. The very sports of the capital of the world were fierce and cruel. The Coliseum could contain one hundred thousand spectators —

“And here the buzz of eager nations ran
In murmur’d pity or loud-roar’d applause,
As man was slaughtered by his fellow-man!
And wherefore slaughtered? Wherefore, but because
Such were the bloody circus’ genial laws,
And the imperial pleasure?”

Coming to later times, we observe that, on the continent of Europe, the power of the people was unknown until within a recent period. In France, more than once, the people have sought to rear free institutions; but war has desolated its fair plains, and it is impossible to read its future. Throughout the continent the vestiges of vast military power are still visible. The Baron built his castle, and his vassals crowded into villages under its shadow. Upon the banks of the Rhine these ruined structures — half palace, half fortress — are yet to be seen — stern relics of an iron age. England, proud, potent, free as she is to-day, felt too long the weight of the feudal system.

The great feature that marks modern civilization is the increased importance of the people. We have reached the era of the masses. Within the present century there has been a wonderful improvement in their condition — physical, social and political. The distance between the privileged classes and the great body of the people is less to-day than it ever was. Those who live to see the close of the nineteenth century may witness the complete enfranchisement of the human race, and the overthrow of every throne under the whole heavens. The great truth that lies deep in the heart of the people — that found utterance in **MAGNA CHARTA** — is becoming vocal in all the languages spoken among men: that the rights and duties of sovereign and subject are reciprocal; and that the failure of the government to protect the people absolves them from their allegiance. Any government that lays its hand upon the liberty of the citizen ought to be subverted, and will be, sooner or later. The

spirit of liberty cannot be destroyed. Deep waters cannot quench it; mountains may be heaped on it—it will yet heave the ocean and the land, and flame up to heaven.

It is to our own country that I propose to limit my observations. The influence which the United States must exert over the fortunes of the human race gives the deepest interest to an inquiry into the elements that constitute our civilization. Our geographical position is commanding. Our possessions stretch, with unbroken continuity, over the continent of North America. On the Atlantic we confront the civilization of the most cultivated nations on the globe. On the Pacific we look across to China and Japan. Their teeming population begins to feel the current of modern civilization; and their long closed gates are thrown open to admit the commerce of the world. We have just completed a highway for the travel and commerce of Europe and Asia.

In the United States you may pass, with perfect security, from one extremity to the other. A package, marked with your initials, may be sent safely from Boston to New Orleans, or from New York to San Francisco, without its wrappings being disturbed. A letter, conveying the most important intelligence, under the cover of a single envelope, flies across the continent, to the hands of the person for whom it is written. You travel from State to State without passports, your trunks free from inspection, and without molestation of any kind. Steam obeys your wishes, and you are borne with a celerity that rivals that of the enchanted horse, described in the Arabian Nights, which was exhibited at Schiraz to the Prince of Persia. Electricity records for you messages every day from all parts of the world. The price of stocks in London at noon to-day, and the arrest of a leader of the Commune in Paris—an event that occurred at Constantinople, or at Alexandria, in Egypt, this morning—you may know before sunset. The result of the late election for President was known by 10 o'clock in the evening.

Families in moderate circumstances enjoy luxuries wholly beyond the reach of wealthy households in Europe, until quite recently. There are more comfortable residences—more cheerful homes—in the United States, than in any other country on the globe. Our laws favor the distribution of property, and discourage the accumulation of great estates. This creates a boundless activity in all classes of society, in every pursuit, and in every department of life. Every man in this country is engaged in money making. Agriculture—the purest of human pursuits; the mechanic arts; the professions—including lawyers, doctors and teachers—all feel the force of the current that sets in from the commercial world. It flows

through society with the power and warmth of the Gulf-stream. Everywhere we see a splendid material civilization. The angel that stands in the sun, and surveys the successive periods of human society, never looked down upon anything like it.

There is great danger that the commercial spirit will acquire a complete ascendancy; that the laws of trade may come to decide every question that affects life, and subordinate the heart and intellect to its metallic sway. The utilitarian philosophy may overmaster us. We may address to every generous scheme and noble enterprise the inevitable *cui bono?* The sublimest objects of the world may fail to impress us: the outspread heavens, the immeasurable ocean, and the great mountains lifting their ice-clad brows to the skies. Standing in the presence of Niagara, we shall presently begin to calculate its importance as a water-power. If everything is to be estimated at its market value, what is to become of the graces of life? How is the soul to vindicate its divine origin by impelling us to self-sacrificing tasks for the good of others? If each one is to look upon his neighbor as important only so far as he may be useful to him, who does not see that the better qualities that adorn, and dignify, and ennable humanity, will droop and perish? The Priest and the Levite will walk along our highways, and the good Samaritan will never be seen there. What is to become of the fine arts? of poetry? of oratory? of heroism, in every form? Was Apelles thinking of the price of his picture when he replied to a friend who, entering his studio, inquired why he bestowed so much labor on it: "I paint for eternity?" Was Phidias speculating as to the sum he should receive for his work, when his chisel cut from the marble block Lacoon and his sons writhing in the folds of the huge serpent just come out of the sea? Did Demosthenes find his inspiration in the hope of preferment, when he denounced, with terrible energy, the advancing Macedonian? Did Milton compose that most glorious of all poems, *Paradise Lost*, to sell it in the market? Alas! he received but five pounds for the manuscript.

There is great danger in this rank utilitarian spirit. Men may deal so much in money as to estimate everything by it: friendship, love, liberty, religion. We have made such a rapid advance in material civilization that we seem fairly open to the criticism of Burke upon his own time, extorted by the fate of the lovely Marie Antoinette, Queen of France: "But the age of chivalry is gone; that of sophisters, economists and calculators has succeeded." We are in great danger of meriting Diderot's celebrated *bon mot*, applied to another people: "They rotted before they ripened."

Wealth is entitled to consideration when it comes to reward honest toil and honorable enterprise. It is worthy of all praise when it is employed for the advancement of the happiness of our race. George Peabody rivals John Howard in the veneration of mankind. Both will go down to the coming generations with the noblest of earthly titles—PHILANTHROPIST. But nothing is so vulgar as wealth, when it is hoarded with meanness, or lavished to pamper pride, or exhibited with insolent ostentation. The social position which it enables one to attain who lacks true nobleness of nature only exposes him to contempt. The lines of Burns still thrill the heart of every true man and every true woman :

“The rank is but the guinea stamp;
The man’s the *gowd* for a’ that.”

No man, who deserves the name, will seek his friends among the rich, merely because they are rich; nor will any woman, whose heart is pure, sell her person to the highest bidder in the market, when he has won neither her respect or affection. Wealth is an accident that may be won or lost; but a true man is of inestimable value; and the price of a virtuous woman is far above rubies. The most ignoble of all servility is that which we pay to Mammon,

“the least erected spirit that fell
From heaven—for, ev’n in heaven, his looks and thoughts
Were always downward bent, admiring more
The riches of heaven’s pavement—trodden gold—
Than aught divine or holy else enjoyed
In vision beatific.”

He who falls down and worships him may receive his reward, but, sooner or later, the victim will throw down the pieces for which he sold himself with a despair too deep to be ministered to by human skill, and over which the rustling wings of no angel that visits the world to cheer the unfortunate will ever be heard. The philosophy that scoffs at love and religion, and looks with contempt on the beautiful; that surveys the glorious works of art that genius has produced, and asks, “What is all this worth?” is at once the meanest and the most demoralizing spirit that ever undertook to instruct mankind. The want of the faculty that enables us to appreciate anything good or beautiful is to be deplored. The greatest of all dramatists has said :

“The man that hath no music in himself,
Nor is not mov’d with concord of sweet sounds,
Is fit for treasons, stratagems and spoils!
The motions of his spirit are dull as night,
And his affections dark as Erebus!
Let no such man be trusted.”

But the utilitarian spirit that so demoralizes a nature originally noble as to bring it to count nothing of any worth that does not, in some way, yield gold, is as dangerous to society as the presence of

Satan in the garden of Eden. It scoffs at all generous emotions, and finds its true impersonation in him who, standing by when the weeping Mary broke the alabaster box of spikenard, very precious, and poured it on that Divine head so soon to droop under the weight of the world's sin and woe, cried out: "Why this waste?" We must subdue this spirit by encouraging the arts that refine and the studies that enoble, and by bringing our hearts under the influence of the teachings that find their inspiration in the words of Him who, seated on the Mount of Olives, uttered truths more beautiful than any ever heard in the schools of antiquity, and doctrines so full of divine authority that we listen to them with blended astonishment and adoration.

Here, upon this broad territory of ours, with a wonderful aggregation of all the elements of wealth, and an increase of population more rapid than any country at any period has exhibited, the problem of society organized under the theory of self-government is to be worked out. It is impossible to regard it without the profoundest interest. Stupendous problem!

The institutions under which we live are new. They are essentially free and popular. It is quite an error to suppose that they were formed upon any model that ever existed. The Government of the United States was a creation. The men who established it were acquainted with all that history could teach. In Asia the government was a simple despotism. In Greece the democratic form had been tried. Rome was, for some time, republican in name. In modern Europe a limited monarchy had been adopted as the best attainable form. Our system, the most complex ever organized, differed from all these. The people of States already in existence established a Government to embrace all these—a **FEDERAL REPUBLIC**. Great powers were conferred on the Federal Government; but all powers not delegated to it by the Constitution, nor prohibited to the States, were reserved to the States respectively, or to the people.

The Republic was capable of the widest expansion. Objects of national interest were under the control of the General Government. Every other interest was to be protected and regulated by the States. The will of the people was to be expressed through their representatives, in certain prescribed forms, and subject to clearly defined restrictions. The States were to be States still. Everything was subordinate to the **CONSTITUTION**—that was supreme. Massachusetts, or New York, might legislate for her people just as she saw fit, so long as her laws did not infringe that. So, too, might South Carolina, or Georgia. A tier of Northern States,

united in support of a common policy, might undertake to control the Government; but they had no right to drive it beyond the well-defined limits traced for it; nor had the Southern States, bound to each other by a powerful interest. The political system organized by the FEDERAL Convention was not a compact, but a Government.

It is not my purpose to-day to discuss questions so lately decided by the arbitrament of war. So long as the contest raged, while I deplored it, and was not in any way responsible for its inauguration, I stood with my people. It is ended. Our banners are laid aside. We mourn our dead heroes. I turn to the South—my own South—my stricken and bereaved mother—and, taking up the lamentation of David, I exclaim: “The beauty of Israel is slain upon thy high places!” I honor the men who stood for us in battle; “they were swifter than eagles; they were stronger than lions.” Our noble women, emulating the constancy of Rizpah, will protect their remains, and with every returning spring scatter flowers upon their graves.

But, my countrymen, the great tasks of life lie before us, and we must address ourselves to them. This great country is our country. The Government of the United States is our Government. The mighty problem that is to be worked out on this continent involves our fortunes and the fortunes of those who are to come after us. So long as I live I shall try to do something for my country. I know that many are despondent. I know that many have given up all hope of restoring the Government to what it was in the better days of its history. There has been so much of wrong, and outrage, and ruin; so much wickedness in high places; so much prostitution of political power; such a wanton abuse of public trusts; such an outgrowth of gross corruption in all the land, that men’s hearts are failing them for fear. All over the country men begin to cry out for change, for relief, for protection. Some demand a master. They invoke Caesar! They would have an Empire. Now, I wish to say for myself, I have not despaired of the Republic. Let others forget the past; let them ignore history; let them consign to oblivion the names of the illustrious men who, grouped about Washington, laid the foundations of this Government; let them clamor for the throne, and the scepter, and the stars and garters, and ribbons; but I take my stand for the Republic. Since the close of the dread drama which this country has so lately witnessed, some men have come to think that the ascendancy of military power is complete; that the Constitution is forever buried; that the people will bow their necks to a master, and shout when the kingly crown is offered to some chieftain. Let them not deceive

themselves. The spirit of liberty has survived the shock of arms. It will yet assert its majesty, and drive before it the insolent minions of usurped power, as Milton's fallen angels fled before the flashing sword of Abdiel.

“ Fond, impious men — think ye yon sanguine cloud,
Rais'd by your breath, hath quench'd the orb of day?
To-morrow he repairs his golden flood,
And warms the nations with redoubled ray.”

The world will not go back upon its course. It yet moves!

The traveller in Switzerland sometimes sees the Alps swept with the fury of a summer storm, when

“ Far along,
From peak to peak, the rattling erags among,
Leaps the livē thunder!”

The cloud hangs upon their icy pinnacles, and shuts from view the green slopes, and chaos seems to have engulfed the landscape. Everything is lost in night, and storm, and darkness. But the morning comes with its peace, and the sun sheds a golden glory over the mountain sides, and touches their peaks with dazzling fire.

Men are sometimes tempted. So, too, are nations. They seem to stand on a high mountain, and see the kingdoms of this world, and the glory of them, in a moment of time; and they may have all if they will only bow down and worship the great fallen archangel. There are in this country men who call good evil, and evil good. We are in the midst of great perils; but we shall come out of them. It was when Satan seemed to be in great power that our Lord saw him, like lightning, fall from heaven.

I have been accustomed to think, and I still think, that, in the order of Providence, we have a great work to do for ourselves and for the nations. We must accomplish it. We must not go back upon our steps. The name of Commonwealth, gone over half the globe, must not be lost here.

There is no man so strong—no party so great in numbers and resources—as to be able to tear down the great ensign of the Republic, as it streams in the winds of heaven to-day, and run up in its place a banner emblazoned with imperial arms.

There is danger of consolidation—the Empire, under the name of a Republic. The late contest decided one question—the perpetuity of the Union. That will stand. It will cover this continent. Our eagles will fly throughout the length and breadth of it. There is another question: Shall the States stand? We must look to that. No really free Government can exist in this country unless we preserve the great structural peculiarities of our political system. The States must assert their dignity and authority, and maintain their sovereignty inviolate.

Let there be no Empire! Let there be no Consolidated Government! Let the Republic stand, embracing free, powerful, sovereign States! Do not attempt to emblazon upon its gorgeous banner a central sun, flooding our broad territory with its dazzling splendor; but let each bright, particular star stand, the whole forming a glorious Constellation, the emblem at once of Liberty and Power.

In the South we live under new conditions. A people, lately our slaves, have been suddenly emancipated. Society, of course, feels the shock. Never have any people experienced so great a change in their industrial and social pursuits. The history of the world records no such phenomenon. These people—a large proportion of our population—are set free; they are made citizens; they enjoy the protection of equal laws, and participate in our elections.

Now, in my judgment, the future of this race must be what we choose to make it. They look to us as their friends. Let us accept the trust confided to us. Without regrets or resentments, let us do what we can to encourage them to fit themselves for the new condition to which they are advanced. We must antagonize them, or we must rule them by kindness. Surely we need not hesitate as to the wiser or nobler course. We must not abandon our homes, nor must we thrust these people out from among us. In this great agricultural region there must be no conflict between capital and labor.

We shall advance to a higher plane of civilization, and a more abounding prosperity than we have ever yet attained. We shall not own the laborer, but we shall control labor. The laborer will receive compensation for the performance of his tasks, and will become a responsible worker, doing his part intelligently toward making the community richer and happier.

Such is the horoscope of our country, as I read it to-day. Here will grow up the mightiest nation that has ever existed. The great Empires of Asia are gone; the States of Greece have perished; Rome—republican and imperial—lives only in the ruins that crown the seven hills; Carthage is destroyed; the monarchies of modern Europe are perplexed with fear of change; here is the seat of a Government at once powerful and free, whose standard is gilded by the beams of the sun as he rises from the Atlantic waves, and bathed in his dying splendors as he descends beneath the Pacific Ocean; a Government yet destined, we may hope, to be what the earnest and faithful friends of humanity of all ages have longed to see—the desire of nations; the abode of Law, of Liberty, of Religion; an enduring REPUBLIC!



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